

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**  
**IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE**  
*Office of Business Liaison*

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**Q-1 Program: PURPOSE**

International cultural exchange programs under Q classification are intended to provide practical training, employment, in the United States (US) to aliens who will, during the course of their programs, share with the US public the history, culture and traditions of their home countries.

**Q-1 Program requirements**

- Cultural exchange must take place in a school, museum, business, or other establishment where the public (or segment of public with common cultural interest) is exposed to foreign culture in a structured program.
- Program must have a cultural component that is an essential and integral part of the cultural visitor's employment or training.
- Employment and/or training must be the vehicle to achieve the cultural objectives.

**Eligibility of employer/petitioners for Q-1 Programs**

Employer must be actively conducting business in US and maintain an established international cultural exchange program. It must offer Q aliens comparable wages/working conditions to US workers and prove financial ability.

**Eligibility of alien participants for Q-1 Programs**

Aliens selected for international cultural exchange programs must be at least 18 years old and intend to leave the US upon conclusion of their participation. They also must be qualified for the employment or training available through the program and capable of communicating effectively about their home culture or nationalities to the US public.

Q-1 aliens maintain lawful status in the US *only* while engaged in the approved training and/or employment.

**Procedures for obtaining Q-1 Classification**

Form I-129 and Q supplement are submitted by employer/petitioner to the INS Service Center with geographical jurisdiction over the location of the employment/training or of petitioner's headquarters. Initial submission requires complete documentation of program, including evidence that a management official has been designated to administer program. Subsequent submissions, relating to an already approved program, will determine an alien beneficiary's eligibility for Q-1 classification. Multiple beneficiaries may be included on the same petition<sup>1</sup>.

**Duration of Q-1 Program**

Q-1 classification is granted for duration of the approved program or 15 months, whichever is shorter. Programs are not extendible, although previous Q-1 beneficiary may participate in another international cultural exchange program if he/she has been physically present outside the US for at least one year (exclusive of any brief US visits).

**Q-1 Employment Eligibility and Authorization**

Since Q-1 status is employment-specific, Q-1 aliens may work only for one or more employers whose Q-1 petitions have been approved by INS. Documentation of work authorization is an unexpired Form I-94 Arrival-Departure Record, endorsed Q-1, which may be accepted only by the approved Q-1 employer.

**Dependents**

Q classification does *not* include a derivative status for dependents. However, dependents of Q-1 principal aliens may accompany them to the US under any other nonimmigrant classification for which they are eligible, including B-2 *visitor for pleasure* status.

**Q-2 "Walsh" program: PURPOSE**

<sup>1</sup> Replacement or substitution may be possible for aliens not listed in an approved petition, but only for the remainder of the program approved for the beneficiary being replaced.

Until the program sunsets on October 1, 2005, the Irish Peace Process Cultural and Training Program Act of 1998 permits residents of Northern Ireland or of Louth, Monaghan, Cavan, Leitrim, Sligo and Donegal Counties in the Republic of Ireland to participate in US employment and training programs that will provide participants with job and conflict resolution skills in a diverse, cooperative, peaceful, and prosperous environment.

### **Q-2 Program Administrator**

INS and USDOS have selected Logicon, Inc.<sup>2</sup> as the Q-2 Program Administrator. The Program Administrator is responsible for verifying conformance of approved programs with program requirements as well as tracking (via notice from approved employers) the withdrawal or termination of program participants.

### **Q-2 Program requirements**

Employment opportunities are preferred in hospitality, tourism, customer service, information/communications technology, pharmaceuticals, engineering, sales, marketing, promotion, agriculture/horticulture, food processing, and furniture industries<sup>3</sup>.

### **Eligibility of employers for Q-2 programs**

- Availability of employment or a training opportunity in one or more of the above program areas
- Agreement not to “sponsor” Q-2 aliens for any other classification upon conclusion of the program
- Provision of health insurance to program participants
- Provision of written work records to program participants
- Notifying Q-2 Program Administrator of any participant’s withdrawal or termination

### **Eligibility of alien participants for Q-2 programs**

- Maintenance of unabandoned foreign residence
- Age between 18 and 35 (refers to age upon initial admission to US)
- Annual total of participants plus eligible dependents may not exceed 4000<sup>4</sup>
- Residence in Northern Ireland or designated Republic of Ireland county for at least 3 months before application
- Job offer certified by the Q-2 program administrator
- Unemployment of at least 3 months duration, participation in a publicly funded employment program, or current employment with and nomination by an employer in Ireland or Northern Ireland for the purpose of obtaining new skills to enhance that employment

### **Procedures for Q-2 classification**

- Program administrator provides Q-2 program candidate with certification letter to support Q-2 visa.
- Prospective Q-2 alien applies at US consulate in Dublin or Belfast for visa, which is typically valid for the 36-month maximum duration of a Q-2 program.

### **Duration of Q-2 program**

Q-2 training and/or employment programs may last no longer than 36 months. Change of status from another nonimmigrant classification to Q-2<sup>5</sup> is *not* possible. Extension of stay is only available to those Q-2 aliens and dependents who were not initially admitted for 36 months.

### **Q-2 Employment eligibility and authorization**

Since Q-2 status is employment-specific, Q-2 aliens may work only for the employer named in the Program Administrator’s letter. Documentation of work authorization is an unexpired Form I-94 Arrival-Departure Record<sup>6</sup>, endorsed Q-2, which may be accepted only by the approved Q-2 employer.

### **Dependents**

Dependent spouses and minor, unmarried children are eligible for Q-3 classification. ***Both principal aliens and dependents are charged against the 4000 annual Walsh Program quota!*** Q-3 classification does not permit employment in the US.

<sup>2</sup> Logicon is located at 1831 Wiehle Ave., Suite 100, in Reston, Virginia 20190-5241, website [www.walshvisa.net](http://www.walshvisa.net), e-mail [logicon@walshvisa.net](mailto:logicon@walshvisa.net). Telephone number is (571) 203-6242.

<sup>3</sup> Other employment may be considered on a case by case basis.

<sup>4</sup> This applies to fiscal years 2000, 2001 and 2002.

<sup>5</sup> Exception possible for Q-3 dependents, who may change status to Q-2 on a case by case basis.

<sup>6</sup> Although 8 CFR 274a.1(c)(23) states that Q-2 aliens require employment authorization documents from INS, this is an error.